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at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KALPAGE (Sri Lanka)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 88: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued) (A/48/21, A/48/407; A/C.4/48/L.15)

1. Mr. KPAKPO (Benin) said that his delegation had taken note of the Assistant Secretary-General's commitment to work with his staff and with other United Nations bodies to improve the structure and working methods of the Department of Public Information in order to serve the information needs of the international community, which were particularly pressing for the poorer countries. He also welcomed the continuing cooperation between UNESCO and the Department.

2. He wished, however, to express his delegation's concern at certain aspects of the proposed reforms. Resources ought to be shared out on a rational basis so that every part of the Department of Information had the means to carry out the various activities mentioned in draft resolution B in the report of the Committee on Information (A/48/21). Some measures should be taken immediately to remedy certain imbalances, which were noticeably on the increase. One example was the imbalance between the various sections of the United Nations radio service: the African section, covering 51 countries, had only two producers, one French and one English, whereas the other sections each had two producers per language. Another example was the underrepresentation of various groups in the Department: Africans, francophones and women, particularly African women, were all underrepresented. In addition, there was an unequal distribution of United Nations information centres and unequal coverage of United Nations activities in the various regions. There was also an imbalance between the two working languages - French and English - used by the United Nations media.

3. His delegation considered that, despite the shortage of funds, more use should be made of audiovisual materials to help peoples who were most disadvantaged in terms of literacy. He also urged that the Department should support the work of information centres by appointing well-motivated, professional staff, particularly at director level. He noted with regret that one information centre had closed down simply because the secretariat had found no one qualified to be director.

4. He regretted that the Secretariat had taken decisions regarding the information centre in Ouagadougou without holding preliminary discussions with the Government of Burkina Faso, which had not even been informed of the measures taken. Similarly, the integration of 18 information centres with field offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had been carried out without any prior consultation with the Committee on Information or the Special Political Committee.

5. It was also to be regretted that for lack of resources the Assistant Secretary-General sought to restrict a service - press releases - which helped the work of small delegations. He believed that the matter should be referred to the Committee on Information. Efficiency would not be achieved by saving time but neglecting to engage in dialogue.

(Mr. Kpakpo, Benin)

6. At a time when the United Nations global role was constantly developing, when it faced more and more challenges, it was forced to see its funds shrinking, as Member States failed to respect their obligations. The new world information and communication order, however - including press freedom and the duty to inform, particularly in the developing countries - required large amounts of money. It was essential, in his view, that contributions both to the ordinary budget and to the various special budgets should be properly regulated. His delegation therefore called on all countries to meet their obligations. Furthermore, it appealed to the generosity of the richer nations to make voluntary contributions so as to enable the Department to carry out its programmes.

7. He none the less congratulated the Department on its unflagging efforts to increase coverage of major international events, despite lack of funds and staff. He also encouraged the Assistant Secretary-General to take bold action to improve the services of his Department and to lay interesting initiatives before the Committee.

8. The international community would benefit from always working together, through dialogue and collective imagination, to avoid the danger that either the rich or the poor countries had measures imposed upon them. Only thus would the reforms be successful.

9. Mr. HAN TAE SONG (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that the profound changes in the international situation required the establishment of a new world information and communication order. It had often been stressed that the existing imbalances should be removed, but no practical solution had been found and there remained a great gap in the communication capabilities of the developed and the developing countries. Information technologies were still the monopoly of developed countries, often used to transmit their culture, ideas and distorted information. They were also used to block the voices of the developing countries.

10. The United Nations information infrastructure should be improved. The network of information centres should be expanded, which would help to strengthen the relations between the United Nations and the press organs, non-governmental organizations and education centres in developing countries. The United Nations should also help developing countries improve their national information infrastructure. He applauded the action of the Department of Public Information in organizing training programmes for journalists and broadcasters from the developing countries over the previous 12 years.

11. The developing countries themselves should develop a new operational strategy to promote South-South cooperation by strengthening the role of the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries. At the Fourth Conference of Information Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Pyongyang in June 1993, consideration had been given to the possibility of using satellites for the dissemination of information. The Conference had also unanimously adopted the Pyongyang Declaration on establishing international information centres in various regions. Such action would promote the cause of independence of nations by enhancing the role of international information organs. His Government would

(Mr. Han Tae Song, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

continue to play its part by strengthening information bases at national level and intensifying cooperation with the United Nations and with other countries.

12. Mr. NAGY (Hungary) said that the changes that had occurred in the global political environment had to be reflected in the work of the Committee. The end of the cold war had created the possibility of working for a more effective world information and communication order. By the same token, however, the Member States expected the United Nations to harmonize dissenting opinions in settling conflicts and to promote the cessation of armed conflicts, the protection of human rights, the monitoring of democratic elections, the delivery of humanitarian relief, the protection of the environment and the advancement of sustainable development.

13. His delegation welcomed the consensus resolutions arrived at in the Committee on Information when it dealt with the sensitive topic of information policies. That Committee's next task was to strengthen the consensus and take new, practical steps towards attaining freedom of information, which was a fundamental human right, throughout the world. A characteristic feature of an undemocratic society was control of the flow of information. Paying tribute to journalists who had lost their lives in the course of their duties, he said that all violations of press freedom were unacceptable and should be strongly condemned.

14. The United Nations had the opportunity to help facilitate wider dissemination and exchange of information among States. His country attached great importance to the constant flow of information among different organs of the United Nations and between it and Member States.

15. Recognizing the strict budgetary constraints on the Department of Public Information, his delegation applauded the Department's efforts to improve efficiency. In view of the increased demand for information about United Nations activities, however, the Department would have to give priority to such activities as peace-keeping and peacemaking, the promotion of human rights and humanitarian assistance. In conclusion, he expressed his delegation's support for the two draft resolutions recommended in paragraph 86 of the report (A/48/21).

16. Ms. RAVN (Norway), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries - Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and Norway - was pleased to note that, as in previous years, the Committee on Information had adopted its report without a vote. It was of the utmost importance to maintain such a consensus. Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the conditions globally for exercising the right of information had undergone radical change. The number of new viewers, listeners and readers, along with the amount of information available to them, was constantly increasing, particularly in regions where there had formerly been no free flow of information. The Nordic countries had high hopes that the new means of communication and information would make for greater democracy everywhere. They hoped that it would be possible for decisions to be taken as close as possible to the people affected; information on global environmental problems, for example, was often crucial for reaching the best solutions at local levels.

(Mr. Ravn, Norway)

17. Economic cooperation would also benefit if the communication capacity of the developing countries was improved. The Nordic countries continued their support of the International Programme for the Development of Communication of UNESCO. Paying tribute to journalists and publishers who had been abused or killed while carrying out their work, she added that the development of a free press was of paramount importance. The dissemination of views should not be hampered, even when they were critical of the authorities.

18. The United Nations was faced with growing expectations regarding its role. It was therefore important that the general public should get a realistic view of what it was doing and could do. At the same time, the Department of Public Information needed further rationalization. It should retain a high degree of flexibility, with the ability to respond to important developments. It should be involved from the very beginning when the United Nations took on new challenges such as peace-keeping or monitoring elections. Its successful work with the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was a good example. Another information success had been the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in June 1992, which had resulted in increased public awareness.

19. She expressed concern, however, at the level of funding proposed for the Department for 1994-1995: almost $136 million, amounting to nearly 5 per cent of the total regular budget. That was more than the proposed amount for human rights and humanitarian affairs put together. Further increases in quality and output should be sought through a reallocation of resources.

20. United Nations information centres should also be scrutinized in order to make better use of resources. As part of the task of integrating separate United Nations offices in the same location, some centres should become regional information centres serving several countries on an equal basis. Not only financial, but other qualitative benefits would be achieved. The Nordic countries agreed that the Department should report its findings on the trial period of integration to the Committee on Information, thereby, she hoped, alleviating the fears of those opposing the integration.

21. Lastly, the Nordic countries strongly supported the Assistant Secretary-General's intention to overhaul the Department's activities. They would also support the two draft resolutions and the two draft decisions recommended in paragraphs 86-89 of the Committee's report.

22. Mr. SENGWE (Zimbabwe) said he understood that the merger of the Special Political Committee and the Decolonization Committee had not diminished the importance of the agenda items allocated to the Committee. The United Nations role required that its image should be appropriately focused. Since its success depended on an informed public, however, it was imperative that information should flow freely. The danger was that most developing countries would be bypassed, since they lacked the technology, training and resources. In that connection he paid tribute to the work of the International Programme for the Development of Communication of UNESCO and the seminars organized jointly by the Department of Public Information and UNESCO. There was a need for further training programmes.

(Mr. Sengwe, Zimbabwe)

23. He praised the Department's work on disseminating information on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and its production of the quarterly Africa Recovery. The Department had also alerted the international community to the possibility of famine during the 1992 drought in southern Africa. He urged the Department to publicize the forgotten tragedy in Angola, where 1,000 people were reported to be dying every day. More information was also needed about the changing situations in Palestine and in South Africa. The Department could play a catalytic role in the dismantling of apartheid.

24. With regard to the integration of United Nations information centres, he said that, although his delegation realized that costs could thereby be saved, the integration raised many questions pertaining to governance, since information offices were funded by the regular budget, unlike UNDP offices. He asked what effect that would have on the relationship between Secretariat personnel and personnel from specialized agencies with different mandates. He considered that integration should not proceed further until the criteria and goals of integration had been defined.

25. He welcomed the establishment of an information centre in Sana'a, the reactivation of the centre in Tehran and the enhancing of the centres in Bujumbura, Dar es Salaam and Dhaka. Moreover, Zimbabwe believed that the appointment of directors for the centres in its region would help to improve the dissemination of information about United Nations activities in Rwanda, Somalia, Angola, Mozambique, Liberia and South Africa. As for the opening of new centres, his delegation's view was that proper procedures would have to be adhered to.

26. Mr. AL-ZAYANI (Bahrain) said that the role of the information media in facilitating the flow of accurate information as part of the endeavour to establish a new information and communication order had assumed particular importance since the interests of countries had become more closely interlinked and the aspirations of peoples had taken on a greater degree of similarity.

27. The concerns expressed at the possible adverse impact of the integration of 18 United Nations information centres with UNDP field offices might be allayed if the experience was subjected to an objective evaluation, as proposed in the Secretary-General's report (A/AC.198/1993/7). The information centres transmitted the message of the United Nations to peoples and disseminated its principles among them and, at a time when the United Nations had acquired increased capacity as a unique forum for the common endeavour for peace and development and its image had been strengthened by a new consciousness among peoples, their activities should be enhanced.

28. The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should be marked by highlighting the Organization's objectives of maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction.

29. His delegation hoped that the important international conferences scheduled for 1994 and 1995 would be given adequate coverage by the Department of Public

(Mr. Al-Zayani, Bahrain)

Information, within existing resources, given their importance in promoting the objectives set forth in Article 55 of the Charter.

30. Mr. LEPESHKO (Belarus) said that the removal of the ideological barriers of the cold-war period and the developments in the means of communication had enabled information to flow freely throughout the world. Information was therefore becoming a powerful influence on public opinion, which implied greater responsibility on the part of those who controlled that tool. Belarus, which was facing the challenge of establishing an independent information system, was guided by the principle that free flow of and access to information played an important role in strengthening democracy and promoting social and economic development. The Belarusian Parliament was currently discussing bills on the press, television and radio, as well as the policy for development of the information system of Belarus.

31. In establishing an independent information system, Belarus was careful to avoid national isolation; it remained open to exchanges of information and hoped that international organizations, in particular the United Nations, would render it support and assistance. In that connection, he welcomed the establishment of the Interim United Nations Office in Belarus, which was taking its first steps in promoting coordination between the United Nations system and various public and non-governmental structures in Belarus.

32. The establishment of a new world information and communication order was a priority task for the United Nations. The existing imbalance in information flows should be redressed and priority given to the needs of developing countries and new democracies through the strengthening of their communication infrastructures.

33. His delegation noted with appreciation the large volume of work done by the Department of Public Information in important areas such as international security and disarmament, peace-keeping, decolonization and human rights. The success of those activities and their support by the world community depended on the extent to which the latter was informed of the real objectives of the United Nations, its resources and needs. The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was a good example of that success. His delegation hoped that the Department would also contribute successfully to such events as the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 and the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, as well as such an important event as the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

34. He noted that 1996 would mark the tenth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, which had threatened millions of lives. That tragic anniversary should be used to remind everyone of the dangers of the "peaceful atom" and the inadmissibility of an attitude of neglect towards the powers of nature. His delegation proposed that the Committee should consider the development and implementation of a system-wide information programme for that anniversary.

35. As a member of the Committee on Information, his delegation confirmed its readiness to cooperate with other delegations and the Department of Public Information to ensure that the voice of the United Nations was clearly heard among the many information voices in the media. It would join in the consensus

(Mr. Lepeshko, Belarus)

on the draft resolutions submitted by the Committee on Information and hoped that they would be adopted without a vote.

36. Mr. CISSE (Senegal) said that his delegation, a member of the Group of 77, endorsed the statement made by the Chairman of the Group before the Committee.

37. The caustic and frequently exaggerated criticism of the United Nations in recent times was basically due to a lack of information about United Nations activities and should be eliminated through the establishment of a more reliable and transparent communication system. The lack of such a system was largely responsible for the fact that the neutrality of the United Nations was being questioned to the point where its credibility was seriously undermined and its activities misunderstood by the very people they were supposed to help. The Department of Public Information should therefore take initiatives and increase its presence in the field, in order to educate and inform the people and raise their awareness of the various United Nations missions. The Department had a special responsibility in the area of peace-keeping operations, for their success was largely dependent on raising public awareness.

38. The operations in Cambodia and Somalia were two examples of the importance of the Department's role. The success achieved by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), had been fostered by efforts in the area of education, information and awareness-raising among the population, which had gained a better understanding of the stakes involved and had mobilized around the goals of UNTAC. As to the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), however, lack of a sustained information campaign had led to a misunderstanding of the goals of the operation by the Somali population.

39. In that context, the United Nations information centres had a crucial role to play; their means should be strengthened and their activities increased. As part of that effort, the Department should aim at establishing a more balanced cooperation, based on a spirit of partnership, with the relevant services of the Member States. That would be of great benefit to the developing countries, especially those in Africa. Despite the Organization's serious financial difficulties, failure to take that situation into account would have serious consequences that could in no way be justified by attempts to economize. For example, the African countries found it difficult to understand why certain of their information centres should be eliminated at a time when new centres were being established in other regions. He therefore appealed to the Department to ensure that the redeployment of the Department's means did not neglect the interests of the developing countries, especially the African countries. In that connection, he commended the decision by the Assistant Secretary-General for Information to maintain publication of the press releases.

40. The best reply to the criticisms directed against the United Nations would be to strengthen the means of the Department of Public Information in order to establish a dialogue among all nations and the international solidarity that was essential for ushering in a better world.

41. Mr. TANG (Cameroon) said that his delegation welcomed the efforts to establish a new world information and communication order and hoped that the various draft resolutions before the Committee would as in previous years be

(Mr. Tang, Cameroon)

adopted without a vote. He paid a tribute to the Secretary-General for his efforts in the area of information in an international context characterized by a worsening of the economic crisis in the poor countries but also by a growing democratization and an increase in freedoms throughout the world.

42. The United Nations was facing new challenges in developing and establishing a fairer information order. Its role as catalyst in achieving peace and understanding among peoples required it to show greater transparency, and the Department of Public Information should play a leading role. In that connection, his delegation endorsed the statement by the Chairman of the Group of 77, which had expressed many of his own delegation's concerns.

43. His delegation wished to reaffirm the importance it attached to United Nations action through its information centres, especially in Africa, where the centres played an essential role in combating apartheid, poverty, drought, AIDS and other pandemics threatening the continent. The centres also helped promote democracy and respect for human rights. Consequently, the Department's current policy, aimed at merging some of the centres with UNDP offices and even, at times, eliminating them altogether without a General Assembly mandate, gave cause for concern. While he encouraged the efforts undertaken by the Department, which was facing serious financial difficulties, and while he was aware of its need for flexibility in the daily management of its activities, transparency and respect for the spirit of General Assembly resolutions should be its guide. The principle of equity should also guide it in other areas such as the geographical distribution of posts and the use of official languages. Those remarks should in no way be taken as criticism of the Department, whose activities had often been responsible for publicizing just causes such as the struggle against apartheid and racism. In that connection, special attention should be given to certain regions of the world where xenophobia held sway. In conclusion, he said that Cameroon, which was committed to democracy and freedom of expression, would always support any initiative aimed at strengthening freedom and pluralism in the field of information.

44. Mr. BUTLER (Australia) said that the United Nations was undergoing a period of transition, the management of which was the critical challenge before it. Following the reforms that had begun in the political and economic areas, the time had come to make an equally serious effort in the field of public information. When he spoke with members of the general public, he was struck by the gap between their high expectations concerning the United Nations and their lack of accurate information as to what the United Nations actually was. That gap in perception had to be closed, and the responsibility lay with the United Nations itself.

45. Efforts should focus on three areas: management of relations between the United Nations and the media; continuing provision of general public information; an examination of how the United Nations was organized in the field. In his view the Department received generally sufficient resources, had set itself modern priorities and enjoyed high-level political backing. The task at hand was to continue the reforms begun in other areas, such as the political organs and the Secretariat, and to strengthen the Secretary-General's efforts. His Government would consider offering expert assistance in the fields of media and technology if that were felt to be useful.

Statements in exercise of the right of reply

46. Mr. GIOVAS (Greece), referring to the statement of the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at the previous meeting, said that it had contained an incorrect denomination of the State in question. As stipulated in Security Council resolution 817 (1993), that State should be provisionally referred to for all purposes within the United Nations as the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia pending settlement of the difference that had arisen over the name of the State. That difference had not yet been settled.

47. Mr. TASOVSKI (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), referring to Security Council resolution 817 (1993), said that when his country had been recommended for membership in the United Nations, no reference had been made to the use of its constitutional name, i.e. the Republic of Macedonia. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, no one had the right to impose a name on a sovereign and independent State.

48. Mr. GIOVAS (Greece) said that there was no room for interpretation of Security Council resolution 817 (1993), whose text was self-explanatory. Any interpretation of the text would render the resolution devoid of meaning.

49. Mr. TASOVSKI (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) expressed disappointment at the fact that the representative of Greece was persisting in an incorrect interpretation of that resolution.

AGENDA ITEM 116: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

Draft resolution in document A/48/23 (Part IV), chapter VIII, paragraph 10

50. A recorded vote was taken on the draft resolution.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey,

Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zaire, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

51. The draft resolution was adopted by 122 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

52. Mr. AL-ATTAR (Syrian Arab Republic) and Mr. BUBALA (Zambia) said that they would have voted in favour of the draft resolution had their machines been working.

53. Mr. ARKWRIGHT (United Kingdom), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had abstained because it did not agree with the statement in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution that it was for the General Assembly to decide when a Non-Self-Governing Territory had reached the level of self-government sufficient to relieve the administering Power of the obligation to submit information under Article 73 e of the Charter. Such decisions must be left to the government of the Territory concerned and to the administering Power. The United Kingdom would, of course, continue to comply with its obligations in respect of the British dependent Territories under the Charter.

54. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of item 116.

AGENDA ITEM 117: ACTIVITIES OF THOSE FOREIGN ECONOMIC AND OTHER INTERESTS WHICH IMPEDE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES IN TERRITORIES UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION AND EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE COLONIALISM, APARTHEID AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other items) (continued)

Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration

AGENDA ITEM 118: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

Draft resolution in document A/48/23 (Part III), chapter V, paragraph 13, and amendments thereto in document A/C.4/48/L.11

Draft decision in document A/48/23 (Part III), chapter VI, paragraph 14, and amendments thereto in document A/C.4/48/L.12

Draft resolution in document A/48/23 (Part IV), chapter VII, paragraph 15, and amendments thereto in document A/C.4/48/L.13

55. Mr. PHEKO (Observer, Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC)), speaking under item 18, and noting that there could be no double standard in the treatment of any colonial situation, said that the South African situation was fundamentally one of colonialism and indeed the darkest chapter of colonial history in Africa. The British colonial Power had in 1909 united four separate colonies to form South Africa. Disregarding the indigenous African majority population, it had, by a deliberate manipulation of international law, given political power to the minority colonialist and racist settlers, who, although they represented only 7 per cent of the population, completely controlled the South African Parliament and held 87 per cent of the land. Thus, in their own country, Azania, the Africans did not have a single seat in Parliament nor did they have the right to vote or have title to land. The legacy was poverty, lack of education and an enormously high rate of infant mortality.

56. Thus the fundamental issue of colonialism had never been resolved in South Africa and had instead developed into apartheid colonialism. Apartheid, a crime against humanity akin to genocide, was on a par with war crimes according to the accepted standards of international law, and as such must be punished.

57. The PAC pleaded with the Committee to continue to be seized with the question of South Africa until there was de facto and de jure majority rule in Azania. It was an unforgivable mistake to view South Africa as currently constituted as a sovereign State, yet through cynical manipulation it had become a member first of the League of Nations and then of the United Nations. For the people of Azania to be represented at the United Nations at all, they had first to be massacred in the peaceful Sharpeville uprising led by the PAC in 1960, which had internationalized the South African tragedy.

58. In a situation where the colonial Power had abdicated its responsibility to decolonize the country, the colonized Africans currently found themselves negotiating with the racist colonialist regime of South Africa, which was both a player and a referee, a prosecutor and a judge. The Committee should not be led by the so-called "positive changes" in South Africa to sacrifice the interests of the victims of apartheid on the altar of political and economic convenience and international expediency. Progress had been made but it was still largely superficial and had been exaggerated; too much had been done to rehabilitate the South African regime. The people of Azania needed to be reassured that their national interests were not being undermined. They carefully followed and appreciated the progressive resolutions adopted by the Committee, which encouraged the oppressed to seek a peaceful settlement in South Africa.

59. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea), speaking as Chairman of the Special Committee on decolonization, introduced the amendments contained in documents A/C.4/48/L.11, L.12 and L.13 to the five draft resolutions and the draft decision under items 117, 18 and 118.

60. The historic statement of the President of the African National Congress (ANC), Mr. Nelson Mandela, before the Special Committee against Apartheid on 24 September 1993 and the subsequent decision by the General Assembly to lift sanctions against South Africa had led the Special Committee on decolonization

(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

to agree unanimously that the draft resolutions and the draft decision in question should be revised to reflect those developments. After long and painstaking consultations on the amendments proposed by the front-line States and the Group of African States, on which they had made great compromises, the members of the Special Committee had unanimously agreed to the amendments which the Fourth Committee had before it.

61. The Special Committee hoped that they would be adopted by consensus.

62. The amendments in document A/C.4/48/L.11 to the draft resolution in document A/48/23 (Part III), chapter V, paragraph 13, were adopted without a vote.

63. Mr. COOLS (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Community in explanation of vote before the vote on the draft resolutions and decision contained in document A/48/23 (Parts III and IV) under items 117, 18 and 118, said that their delegations had noted that the language of certain draft resolutions was indeed more moderate than in previous years and had expressed hope during the general debate that the announced amendments would take into account the changing situation in South Africa and the decisions taken by the General Assembly. They were pleased to note that references to sanctions against South Africa had been deleted, which was only logical. The States members of the European Community, would not, however, be able to vote in favour of the draft resolutions and decision because of their objection in principle to references to apartheid within the framework of decolonization.

64. With regard to item 18, while reaffirming their support for the efforts made by the specialized agencies to provide humanitarian, technical and educational assistance to the dependent Territories, they believed that the autonomy and statutes of those agencies must be respected. With regard to item 117 relating to foreign economic interests, the absence of any clear distinction in the draft resolution on the matter between harmful foreign activities such as the exhaustion of natural resources and beneficial ones such as foreign investment to further the economic and social development of the Territories made it impossible for the members of the European Community to vote in favour. They particularly regretted the new drafting of the title of the draft resolution and the amendment to its first preambular paragraph.

65. The European Community wished to express again its concern over the submission of a draft decision on military activities, since that item was not one of those allocated to the Fourth Committee. They would therefore vote against the draft decision.

66. The Community regretted that the two draft resolutions and the draft decision on which the Committee was about to vote did little to further the Committee's common objectives on decolonization and hoped that the texts submitted at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly would be more balanced and based on greater consensus.

67. A recorded vote was taken on the draft resolution in document A/48/23 (Part III), chapter V, paragraph 13, as amended.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Argentina, Congo, Uruguay.

68. The draft resolution contained in document A/48/23 (Part III), chapter V, paragraph 13, as amended, was adopted by 89 votes to 35, with 3 abstentions.

69. Mr. HEART (Panama) said that he had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution but had failed to press the correct button.

70. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of item 117.

71. The amendments in document A/C.4/48/L.12 to the draft decision in document A/48/23 (Part III), chapter VI, paragraph 14, were adopted without a vote.

72. A recorded vote was taken on the draft decision, as amended.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania,

Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Argentina, Congo, Japan.

73. The draft decision in document A/48/23 (Part III), chapter VI, paragraph 14, as amended, was adopted by 92 votes to 34, with 3 abstentions.

74. The amendments in document A/C.4/48/L.13 to the draft resolution in document A/48/23 (Part IV), chapter VII, paragraph 15, were adopted without a vote.

75. A recorded vote was taken on the draft resolution, as amended.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Armenia, France, Netherlands, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay.

76. The draft resolution in document A/48/23 (Part IV), chapter VII, paragraph 15, as amended, was adopted by 90 votes to 6, with 33 abstentions.

77. Mr. BARONCELLI (Italy), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation fully endorsed the explanation of vote given by the representative of Belgium on behalf of the European Community and its member States. He wished to comment, however, on the draft resolution in document A/48/23 (Part IV) on the role of the specialized agencies, which had just been adopted. Italy had abstained during the vote because efforts had been made to improve the text by means of factual, realistic language. However, with a view to better serving the interests of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and to respecting the autonomy and statutes of the specialized agencies, the Special Committee should strive for greater accuracy in drafting resolutions on that question at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

78. Mr. McKINNEN (New Zealand) on the role of the specialized agencies, said that New Zealand had voted in favour of the draft resolution because, as an administering Power, it supported the activities of the specialized agencies in the Non-Self-Governing Territories and believed that the draft resolution, together with the attendance of representatives of the specialized agencies at meetings of the Fourth Committee, would help to encourage an appropriate focus on the needs of those Territories. He had also been pleased to note that outdated references to apartheid had been deleted from the adopted draft. The presence of such references in a resolution devoted to the activities of the specialized agencies of the United Nations was incongruous and distorted the emphasis of the text as a whole, which was on the problems of the Territories. He urged the Committee to remove similar references from draft resolutions submitted under that item at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

79. Ms. CAÑAS (Argentina), speaking in explanation of vote, said that her delegation appreciated the work of the United Nations in the decolonization field and welcomed the updated language appearing in the draft resolutions and the draft decision.

80. Mr. SIDOROV (Russian Federation), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation appreciated the efforts of the representatives of the front-line States and other African States to remove references to apartheid from the texts of the draft resolutions and the draft decision. Those efforts were in line with current positive developments in South Africa, with the views expressed by Mr. Nelson Mandela and also with the decision of the United Nations General Assembly to remove economic sanctions against South Africa.

81. Nevertheless, his delegation was concerned that the amendments had not gone far enough in deleting references to issues that were outside the competence of the Committee. Indeed, the adopted drafts continued to contain provisions regarding apartheid and obsolete formulations that diverged from the wording of

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the consolidated draft resolution on 10 Non-Self-Governing Territories. In addition, his delegation was also concerned that the amended draft resolution on the activities of foreign economic interests failed to distinguish clearly between the harmful and the beneficial effects of those activities. For those reasons, the Russian Federation had felt compelled to vote against the draft resolutions and decision. It hoped that United Nations bodies concerned with decolonization would in future strive to achieve an atmosphere of cooperation.

82. Mr. HEART (Panama), speaking in explanation of vote, said that he had voted in favour of the draft resolutions and decision because, in the opinion of his delegation, the amended texts represented a distinct improvement over language in the resolutions and decisions which the Committee had adopted under those agenda items in the past.

83. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had completed its consideration of item 118.

AGENDA ITEM 119: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.4/48/L.5

84. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that Bulgaria, India, Mali and Barbados had become co-sponsors of the draft resolution and suggested that the Committee could adopt it without a vote.

85. Draft resolution A/C.4/48/L.5 was adopted unanimously.

86. Mr. MUNYAMPETA (Rwanda) said that, had he been present during the votes on the draft resolutions and the draft decision, he would have voted in favour of all of them.

87. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 119.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.4/48/L.4 relating to the question of Western Sahara

88. Mr. DE SOUZA (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Secretary-General had reviewed the programme budget implications of the recommendations of the Special Committee concerning the questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Tokelau, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Pitcairn, St. Helena, and New Caledonia, as contained in document A/48/23 (Part VI), chapter X, paragraphs 28 and 29, and A/48/23 (Part VII), chapter XI, paragraph 9. It was assumed that those recommendations would not give rise to additional costs or programmatic changes since adequate provision had been made under section 3A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

89. Mr. NYAKYI (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Chile, Colombia, the Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Suriname, Swaziland, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe, said he wished to place on record those States' full support for the settlement plan for Western Sahara adopted by the Security Council in resolutions 658 (1990) and 690 (1991). They welcomed the direct talks between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente Polisario), and encouraged those two parties to speed up the process through direct dialogue leading to the holding of a referendum for self-determination.

90. They also welcomed the visit of the Secretary-General to the region in May and June 1993 and expressed their appreciation to the States that had provided civilian and military contingents for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). Lastly, they reaffirmed their full support for draft resolution A/C.4/48/L.4 and urged the Committee to adopt it by consensus.

91. Mr. SNOUSSI (Morocco), speaking in explanation of position, said, in reference to the previous speaker, that he would have thought a statement of support by the Chairman of the Committee on behalf of the members would have been sufficient and more in keeping with the logic of consensus and the practice of the United Nations than a separate statement on a draft resolution that would be adopted without a vote. Nevertheless, since the previous speaker had made a separate statement in support of the draft resolution, he felt an obligation - speaking for the "silent majority" - to state that Morocco supported with equal firmness all the provisions of the draft resolution and not just those parts expressing support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative.

92. He noted that the previous speaker had neglected to mention the progress made by MINURSO in the region to date, particularly the preparatory work of the Identification Commission with a view to implementing the settlement plan, which the international community and the Security Council had considered to be the means by which to reach a fair and lasting solution. Whereas the previous speaker had highlighted, almost to the exclusion of other aspects, the positive exploratory dialogue initiated in Laayoune, the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and the interested countries had always intended that dialogue to be a complement to the settlement process and not a substitute for it.

93. He also noted that, contrary to what had been requested in the statement by the previous speaker, the dialogue could not touch upon all unresolved issues, since most of them fell within the exclusive competence of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, as the latter had made clear in his note verbale of 19 October 1993. Morocco wished to reaffirm its view that dialogue could not be imposed on one of the parties and that the specific form of the dialogue must

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be agreed upon in advance between them. For its part, Morocco would prefer, instead of a dialogue-cum-media event, a substantive dialogue between the appropriate delegations that would create a climate of trust and facilitate the holding of the referendum. It was in that spirit that the Moroccan delegation had come from Rabat and was still present in New York.

94. Furthermore, if his own remarks had been taken into consideration, he would have had no difficulty in endorsing the remarks of the previous speaker. In conclusion he thanked the States participating in MINURSO and United Nations staff currently working in the Western Sahara for their efforts.

95. Draft resolution A/C.4/48/L.4 was adopted without a vote.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.